

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FEDERAL RULES TIGHTEN PROTECTION FOR BALD EAGLES AND GOLDEN EAGLES

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall today announced Federal regulations that will provide full protection to the American bald eagle and golden eagles from hunting by airplanes and poison.

The rules also set up a limited permit system that will prevent the killing of all bald and golden eagles except with the advance permission of the Department's Fish and Wildlife Service.

Secretary Udall explained the new rules put into effect the protective features of a law signed by President Kennedy in October 1962. The laws and regulations extend to golden eagles the protection earlier granted the bald eagle--the national bird--by Congress in 1940.

Under the regulations, the Fish and Wildlife Service will administer a strict permit system that will rigidly limit the killing of bald or golden eagles to instances where the birds are doing serious injury to wildlife, agricultural crops, or other interests and where it can be shown that the only way to reduce the damage or injury is by direct control of the eagle population.

In addition, the Department may issue permits to take live or dead birds or collect their nests for certain scientific purposes when such permits are compatible with preserving and protecting the eagle populations.

The law requires the Secretary, when requested by the Governor of any State, to authorize the taking of golden eagles for the seasonal protection of livestock for such time and in such areas as the Secretary considers necessary. Secretary Udall recently received an urgent request for such authority from the Governor of Texas and has authorized the killing of golden eagles--except by poison and airplanes--by livestock operators and their agents in 28 Texas counties.

At the same time, Secretary Udall directed the Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct immediately a field study on golden eagle depredations in that area during the period covered by the special permission, which ends April 30, 1963. The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Fish and Wildlife Service, has assigned a special two-man team to make this study. One of these men is a predator and rodent-control specialist; the other a biologist. The study will assist the Department of the Interior in assessing the long-term adequacy of the regulations--in protecting the eagles and in the interests of livestock operators.

The new regulations will allow permits to be issued to Indians for taking bald or golden eagles for religious purposes.

Bald eagles or their parts, nests, or eggs that were lawfully acquired prior to June 8, 1940, and golden eagles or their parts, nests, or eggs that were lawfully acquired before October 24, 1962, may be possessed or transported without a Federal permit, but may not be purchased, sold, traded, bartered, or offered for sale, trade, or barter in any place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

Federal wildlife laws are enforced by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife.

The new rules go into effect on April 1, 1963. In the interim, permit applications should be sent to the Director, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C.

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